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GALLIGER

BY

REA WOODMAN, M. A.

Eldridge Entertainment House
Franklin, Ohio

GALLIGER

A High School Comedy in Three Acts.

With a Prologue.

BY

REA WOODMAN, M. A.

Author of "The Sweet Girl Graduates," "His Uncle John,"
"The Professor" and "Bess Goes to Europe."

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ELDRIDGE ENTERTAINMENT HOUSE
FRANKLIN, OHIO.

PS 3545
O.H. G. 3
1911

To my good friend and college-mate, Professor Maurice Ricker, of Des Moines, Iowa. As "The Sweet Girl Graduates" was written at his suggestion and for his pupils, it is with pleasurable gratitude that I charge to his account this series of high school plays.

THE PERSONS OF THE COMEDY

Mrs. Martha Grindem, the Principal's Wife,

At whose home the Senior Reception is held.

Professor John Grindem, the Principal Himself,

Temporarily in the Background.

Mr. William Morton, His Mother-in-Law,

Who is so interested, you can't think!

Mr. Markam Wright, Professor of Science and All That,

Who has solemnly promised he will come.

Margaret Woodward, otherwise "Babe," a capable Freshman,

Chairman of the Committee on Refreshments.

Galliger Gurdy, a Special, Her First Assistant.

Frank Sawyer, President of the Senior Class.

Millicent Cameron, Secretary of the Same.

Bessie Tapping, a Senior.

Mame Hensell, a Junior.

Mrs. Bettie Snitters, The Woman with the Mop.

Mary, the Housemaid.

SYNOPSIS

Prologue. *After school, at the "Rafton High," one week before the Senior Reception.*

"Well, then ask Galliger. He's worth any three committees."

Act I. *The Library of the Grindem Home, ten o'clock, the Morning of the Great Day.*

"Lay on, Macduff, and confusion 'light on him who says I've done enough!"

Act II. *The Kitchen of the Grindem Home, three o'clock the Afternoon of the Same Day.*

"The front steps have been scrubbed twice, and I have ordered the furnace painted green."

Act III. *The Parlor of the Grindem Home, half-past seven o'clock, the Evening of the Same Day.*

"They're coming! The whole bunch! Fix your faces!"

PROLOGUE

(The girls' cloakroom of the Rafton High School, one June afternoon after school. A few girls' stray belongings scattered around, and a row of summer hats against the wall. Babe Woodward is discovered on the only chair, writing in a note-book. Enter Mame Hensell, with an armload of books.)

Mame. Hello, Babe! I thought you'd gone home. Galliger's looking for you.

Babe. Hope he'll find me! I wish to goodness I could go home. I've a hundred things to do; why, I don't even know what I'm going to wear tonight! I'm waiting for that committee.

Mame. Is n't it hot? What committee?

Babe. *(scratching away in the note-book).* The Committee on Refreshments for the Senior Reception. This is the third time I've called a meeting. They all claim they're so busy! I guess I'm busy, too, so far as that goes.

Mame. *(at the mirror).* Who's on it?

Babe. Bob Stevens and Alice Furley,—only three of us.

Mame. In a committee of three one ought to be sick and one out of town. Then there can be something done. I saw Alice Furley going home an hour ago.

Babe. *(turning to inspect the row of hats).* Yes, sir, her hat's gone! I don't believe she wants to do anything! She promised she'd be here now. She'd rather parade up and down Main Street with Clay Sanders!

Mame. *(inspecting her "back hair").* She was with Clay Sanders all right.

Babe. I'll wager she was! All right, then, she does n't have to do anything! I don't need a brick wall to fall on *me*! What time is it?

Mame. Nearly five. Graham kept us over time. He gets worse every day.

Babe. Nearly five! And we were to meet at four!

Mame. What are you going to have?

Babe. I don't know. That is, I have n't decided. The committee has n't done a thing—not a thing!

Mame. I can't do anything with my hair. I always dread to wash it on that account. Why don't you go ahead and do as you please? I would. The chairman always has to do it all, anyway.

Babe. I suppose I'll have to, but it makes me tired.

(*Enter BESSIE TAPPING, looking somewhat the worse for wear.*)

Bess. (*throwing down her books*). That chemistry exam was a fright! I never heard of half the things! I'll bet I did n't pass! He must have sat up nights, thinking up things that were n't in the book!.

Mame. (*taking her hat from the wall*). He always does that, they say. Last year he flunked thirty-seven out of forty-two. Don't you remember? There was an awful fuss about it.

Bess. Well, I know one he'll flunk *this* year, all right!

Babe. What do you people want,—peppermint creams or English walnuts?

Bess. (*on the bench, hunting something in a big book*). Both, of course. Why? What? When?

Babe. At your Reception. I'm Chairman of the Eatin's.

Bess. I thought Galliger was. He says he knows what we're going to have.

Mame. (*smoothing the ribbons of her hat*). That's just his blow. He does n't, at all. He always claims to know everything.

Babe. Which will you have, I said, peppermint creams or nuts?

Bess. (*turning pages and pages*). You mean with the ice cream?

Babe. (*shutting her note-book with force*). Do they usually serve peppermint creams with the soup?

Mame. Who's going to serve?

Babe. The Freshman girls—if they have n't any other engagements!

Bess. (*triumphantly*). There, we never had that third question! I said we had n't! Frank says he put down, "See you later. Gone to Atlantic City." I did n't put down anything. Well, I don't care. If I don't pass, I don't, and that's all there is to that. (*steps to the mirror*). Horrors, my hair! Why did n't you tell me? I look like a scarecrow! (*to Babe*). Why don't you do as you please? I would. Let them come to the meetings if they want to have any say.

Babe. But think what there is to do! It's easy enough to talk, but who's going to tend to the dishes and the chairs and the napkins and—and everything! And who's going to help me in the kitchen? They want deviled-ham sandwiches; who's going to make them?

Mame. (*pinning on her hat, peeping over Bess's shoulder*). Get Galliger to help you. He's got time.

Bess. (*her mouth full of hairpins*). I reckon Galliger'll be on deck. He usually is. And he can do anything, you know. But he says that exam about floored him.

Babe. (*scornfully, strapping up her books*). What can a boy do? I want somebody that can do things.

Mame. Well, then ask Galliger. He's worth any three committees. If it had n't been for him, the Junior party would have been a fizzle.

Bess. Oh, girls, have you seen those cretonne hats at Cohen's? They're perfectly lovely, and so swell!

Babe. How much?

Bess. (*pinning on her hat carelessly*). Only a dollar forty-nine. I'm going to get me one. I think I'll get pink roses—the sweetest pink you ever saw!

Mame. I want one, but I've been broke for a week. (*goes toward the door*). I must go see about that cheese-

cloth. Suppose I order a bolt? They've promised to take back what we don't use, if it is n't soiled.

Babe. (*at the mirror*). I'm so tired I don't care how I look. (*yawning*). I'd like to sleep a week! Yes, I think a bolt will be enough.

Mame. Galliger said he'd put it up for us. Well, so long. See you tonight. Oh, what are you girls going to wear?

Babe. (*yawning*). I have n't had time to think.
(*Enter MILLICENT CAMERON, with her hat and books.*)

Bess. Did you get out alive?

Millie. (*sinking on the bench limply*). That was the hardest exam I ever took in my life. I'm about collapsed. Did you get the third?

Bess. (*in the door*). No, nor the fifth, nor the sixth, nor the ninth.

Babe. (*taking up her hat*). Ye Gods, what *did* you get?

Bess. (*with a giggle*). Got left, I reckon. Come on, Mame, I'm going your way.

Mame. Millie, are you going tonight?

Millie. If I survive that exam.

Bess. Oh, what do you care? Everybody always takes chemisty twice. Well, we'll see you later. So long! (*The girls go.*)

Babe. Say, who's on the Decoration Committee?

Millie. I came to look for my hatpins. I can't keep a thing in this place: Decoration Committee for what?

Babe. The Senior Reception. Who's on it, I said?

Millie. (*hunting her hatpins*). Frank Sawyer and Fannie Farren and Mame and me. But Fannie can't serve. Galliger said he'd help.

Babe. (*with cold surprise*). Oh, he did?

Millie. Yes, when Fannie said she could n't, you know, he offered. He's a dandy about helping at the last minute.

Babe. It's a good thing somebody is. Everything will have to be done at the last minute.

Millie. There's plenty of time. Nothing can be done until Thursday morning.

Babe. Mrs. Grindem's awfully nice about it; she says she'll turn the house over to us, and we can fix it as we like. Are you going my way?

(There is a tremendous bravado of whistling in the hall.)

Mame. Guess that's Galliger. He's waiting for you. He told me to tell you to hurry. I forgot.

Babe. Well. I should say you did. *(The shrill whistling comes nearer and nearer, till finally Galliger stands in the door, whistling imperturbably.)* Galliger, for pity sakes! I can't hear myself think!

Galliger. *(peering into the room).* So these are the sacred precincts! Fair sylvan bowers, where oft my sisters played!

Babe. Galliger, will you help on the Refreshment Committee?

Galliger. *(still gazing in curiously).* I should call your quarters commodious, but not elegant. Are you girls going home this week or next?

Millie. I thought I'd go this week. How about you, Babe?

Babe. I said, Galliger, will you help me on the Refreshment Committee?

Galliger. Don't be imperious; it ill becomes a petitioner. I might, if I were properly approached. Who's who? If so, to what extent?

Babe. The Senior Reception, you know. Nobody will do a thing. I can't even get the Committee together.

Galliger. The Committee will probably do better apart. Come on, everybody, let's have a chocolate soda, and consider the matter. It may be that you can retain my services—for a consideration.

Millie. *(as she follows Babe from the room, and over her shoulder, with a light shrug).* I should n't be surprised.

ACT I

(The Library of the Grindem Home, ten o'clock, the Morning of the Great Day. Professor Grindem at his desk, in his shirt sleeves. The room in perfect order and scholarly quiet.)

Grindem. *(leaning back in his swivel chair)*. The further ahead I get, the further behind I am. The Board must think I am twenty men! *(reads aloud, wearily, from a paper he takes up at random)*. "Be it further ordered by the Board of Education, in regular session assembled, that the Principal do prepare, or cause to be prepared, for the use of the Board in such manner as said Board shall see fit, by Friday morning next—" *(gives vent to a prolonged whistle)*. Well, will you listen to that! It's news to me! "Friday morning next." Dated June 5th, and today's Thursday! They want it tomorrow! I guess I might as well jump into Hogan's Creek and be done with it. *(reads aloud from paper)*. ".... by Friday morning next a detailed account of —"

(Enter MARY, rather untidy.)

Mary. *(polishing her face as she comes)*. Perfesser, do you want to see—

Grindem. *(not without irritation)*. You dry your face on your apron? No, I certainly do not. Why don't you use a towel?

Mary. *(giggling in confusion)*. Oh, excuse me. I forgot my face was dirty till I seen you. We have n't got no time to wash around this house. I aint set down since 5 o'clock.

Grindem. *(turning his attention to the paper he holds)*. Has the sheriff taken all the chairs?

Mary. *(giggling)*. Not yet. And they's just come a wagonload more.

Grindem. *(frowning at the paper)*. A wagonload of chairs?

Mary. Yessir. For the doin's tonight, you know.

Grindem. (*looking up*). No, I do not know. What "doin's?"

Mary. (*jerking her thumb in a backward direction*). The scholars—over from the school, of course. They're goin' to have their party here.

Grindem. The scholars—? Oh, you mean the Senior Reception? This is the night. I had forgotten—temporarily.

Mary. Yessir, they're all here now, gettin' the house ready, and a-changin' everything.

(*Enter PROFESSOR WRIGHT, hat in hand.*)

Wright. I beg your pardon, but I thought the girl had forgotten all about me.

Mary. (*somewhat abashed*). Perfesser Wright.

Grindem. (*smiling a little*). Yes, I see it is Professor Wright. (*Mary retires with much soberness*). Good morning, Wright. I'm glad to see you. Sit down here, and tell me what to do about this Reynolds matter. I'd forgotten all about it till a minute ago. The Board has requested a full report by tomorrow morning—tomorrow, if you please! It will take a week to get the facts. Here are some things bearing on it. (*gives some papers.*)

Wright. (*seating himself, always at ease with men*). I came to see you about that. Thompson has worked up considerable feeling on the subject, and we must do something, and do it quick.

Grindem. Yes, I know it. See what you can make out of that first letter there. I can't tell what the man's getting at—or getting away from! (*Grindem turns to his desk, and Wright cons the letter. Presently their preoccupation is interrupted by a light voice, from the next room, "Well, then tell her to get lady fingers..... No, four dozen.....Yes, four dozen."* Then, enter BABE WOODWARD, wearing a fetching little dust cap, a white apron, and carrying a bundle and a work-bag.)

Babe. (*advancing with becoming hesitation*). Good morning, Professor. (*bows to Wright*).

Grindem. Good morning, Miss Margaret. Pardon me. (*Gravely, he reaches for his coat, and slips it on*).

Babe. I beg your pardon, Professor, I did n't know you were here. Mrs. Grindem said she thought you were at the office.

Grindem. (*quite solemnly*). No, I am here. What may I do for you?

Babe. We are so sorry to trouble you, Professor, but you know tonight is the Senior Reception, and we have to have—(*Wright rises from his chair*).

Grindem. Don't go, Wright. We must get this matter straightened out.—What about the Senior Reception, Miss Margaret?

Babe. Why, we want—that is, you see we have decided to have the refreshments served in here, and so if we could have this room for a little while—

Grindem. (*in dismay*). The refreshments in *here*? In my study?

Babe. Oh, it'll be fine! All in green and white, you know; the walls draped here,—and there,—everywhere! You won't know your study tonight!

Grindem. (*dejectedly*). No, I suppose not,—nor tomorrow, either. (*He begins to bundle his papers together hastily*).

Babe. (*archly, to Wright*). Are you so particular about your study, Professor Wright?

Wright. Oh, yes, Miss Woodward. I am even—er more so, I assure you.

Babe. "More so?" You are? Supposing I should come marching into your study with a big, big bundle like this, and a work-bag, and say I'd come to decorate it,—to hang cheesecloth everywhere, what would you do?

Wright. (*painfully embarrassed*). I should be very sorry to see—I mean I should be very sorry to have—er to have you —

Babe. Why, Professor Wright!

Wright. (*dropping his hat and papers*). You un-

derstand me, Miss—I mean you misunderstand me, Miss Woodward. I was about to say that I should be sorry to see my study turned into a—a cafe.

Grindem. (*turning from his desk*). Well, all I ask is that you won't disturb my desk, Miss Margaret.

Babe. Just a bunch of roses on it, please, Professor. Oh, such beautiful ones! I've ordered them on purpose. Galliger wanted red ones—said he'd get them himself. Galliger always thinks he knows best what you like. But I said, "No, sir, nobody gets roses for Prof.'s desk but me, and I'm going to get white ones." I thought I would put them right there, may I? That's where you always look when you are listening to people and thinking about something else. And tomorrow morning, when you look up and try to think of something you've forgotten, why, then there they'll be!

Grindem. (*relenting a little*). I should like that, I think. I'm sure I can recall what I've forgotten then. (*to Wright*). Come, Professor, let's seek "a lodge in some vast wilderness." (*The men walk toward the door.*)

Babe. It's awfully good of you to give up your study, Professor, awfully good. You won't peep in until tonight, will you? Please don't. I want you to be surprised.

Grindem. (*at the door*). Oh, I'll be surprised all right. (*The men go.*)

Babe. (*solus, sizing up the room anxiously*). Dear old Prof., that was nice of him. I know he just hates to go. . . . Green and pink would go better with this room. Bess said the woodwork was white. I knew it was n't. I suppose she was thinking of the parlor; she is always thinking of something else. (*unrolls the cheesecloth from the bundle*). Mame ought to be here. I can't do everything . . . We can put this table in the hall, that, and the desk chair. There won't be any place for the palms. I wonder if I dare shove that desk along a little ways? (*She tries to push it.*) Ugh, it's heavy as lead! Maybe Galliger can move it. If we could get two chairs there! (*tries again to move the desk*). Can't

be done. Even Professor Wright could n't squeeze in there. He's more afraid of girls than I am of rats, and that's saying a good deal. I don't mind mice, but I'm so afraid of rats.

(Enter MAME HENSELL and BESS TAPPING, *hatted and gloved.*)

Babe. Hello, thought you were going to be here at 9 o'clock so smart!

Mame. (*sinking into a chair*). Has that woman come? (*takes off her hat.*)

Babe. (*beginning to carry books from the table to the desk*). What woman?—Bess, don't you think green and white is too delicate for this room? I thought you said the woodwork was white.

Bess. (*figuring in a tiny notebook*). I did n't say anything about the woodwork. You know as much about this room as I do. There, I knew it! That man did n't give me the right change. I've a notion to go right back. Would you or would n't you?

Mame. (*fanning herself with her hat*). How much are you out?

Bess. (*still figuring industriously*). Nine cents, I think. Four and five is nine. Yes, nine cents. Would you go back or would n't you?

Babe. You'd better get to work. I've got to go to the kitchen right off, and this room has to be decorated, and the hall, and the parlor—there is n't anything done.

Mame. (*fanning lazily*). It's a hot morning all right. If you don't take things easier, you'll have rush of blood to the head. (*opens a small paper sack*). Have a lemon drop.

Babe. (*stacking books*). No, thank you. I have all summer to eat lemon drops.

Mame. This room won't be hard to fix. And the parlor's about done. Frank Sawyer's superintending. You know what a fine superintendent he makes.

Babe. (*picking up the cheesecloth, and making some rapid eye calculations*). Who's he superintending?

Mame. Millie Cameron, mostly.

Babe. So she's arrived, has she? Then things will go off like a charm.

Bess. (*with a sigh*). It's only seven cents.

Mame. That cheesecloth's too narrow. We should n't have cut it.—Only seven what, Bess?

Bess. Seven cents that man cheated me out of. I reckon I'll let it slide. But I'll tell him about it when I go there; you see if I don't!—Where is that to go? It's awfully flimsy, is n't it?

Mame. (*measuring the cloth*). Did you expect it would be starched? Galliger says it's to be festooned.

Bess. (*serenely rocking and eating lemon drops*). Festooned it is, then, if Galliger says so.

Mame. Galliger is Commander-in-Chief. He acts as if this were his reception. And he gets flightier every day. Why, he told me yesterday that Professor Wright has been engaged three times! The idea! When he's so afraid of girls that he can't look at one straight!

Bess. Maybe that's what makes him so scared. Three times is a good many.

Mame. Yes, maybe that's what ails him. But most likely Galliger made it up. He ought to cash in his imagination.

Babe. (*sitting down, her hands full of trailing cheese-cloth*). I don't care if Wright's been engaged a hundred times, you people ought n't to knock Galliger. He's worked like a dog for your old reception!

Mame. (*cutting narrow strips of cloth*). Yes, I've a picture of him working like a dog. What's he doing?

Babe. (*threading her needle*). He's been borrowing dishes all morning, and he sent the chairs up, and he's been running errands like a race horse, and—and everything. The Senior Reception's nothing to *him*, I guess.

Mame. (*fashioning a rosette of cloth*). He is n't doing it for the Seniors. Catch Galliger. Millie Cameron calls him your "First Assistant."

Babe. (*tossing her pretty head*) . He probably is, then. She ought to know.—Bess, why don't you do something? It's getting late.

Bess. (*straightening her hat, always awry*). I've got to go back down town. I forgot that baby ribbon. Come on, Mame.

Mame. (*sewing very earnestly*). I can't. It's too hot. Besides, I'm tired. I've chased all over town for that woman. She ought to have been here at 9 o'clock.

Babe. What woman?—Bess, do you see the scissors?

Mame. The scrub woman. I lost her address, and had to traipse all around that end of town.

Bess. Is that what you were doing? What do we want of a scrub woman?

Babe. (*sweetly and tranquilly*). She can be Millie Cameron's First Assistant.—Bess, you go ask Mrs. Grindem for the stepladder. And borrow her workbasket. We have n't thread enough.

Bess. I can't stay, honest. I just came to say that the souvenirs are n't done, and we're out of ribbon.

Mame. Out of ribbon? Well what do you know about that? You had three bolts.

Bess. Well, it gave out last night. What would you do?

Babe. (*with spacious sarcasm*). I would sit in a rocking chair, and rock and rock, and sing, "Shall we gather at the river?"

(*MRS. SNITTERS appears at the door, with bucket and mop.*)

Mrs. S. Beg parding, young wemmin, but is this the liberry?

Mame. Oh, Mrs. Snitters, come right in. This is the room. (*to Babe*). This is the woman I've hired to help Mary, you know.

Mrs. S. (*advancing with dignity*). I am the lady wot she engaged for to scrub the floors. I wus reg'-

larly engaged, and I am capable to do the work. I only asted to know is this the liberry.

Babe. (slowly). Oh, yes, I see.

Mame. (eyeing Mrs. Snitters uneasily). Did you see Mary?

Mrs. S. (loftily). The young woman with the bib apron? She tole me to go to the liberry, and see the young wemmin.

Babe. It's too late to scrub the floor now, even if it needed it, which it does n't.

Mame. (edging toward the door). I think I'd better go with Bess, and help her finish the souvenirs.

Babe. You'd better put this woman to work. I don't know what to do with her. You hired her. I'm not on the Decoration Committee.

Mame. (drawing on her gloves). But if the souvenirs are n't done, there'll be trouble.—Mrs. Snitters, Miss Woodward will direct you what to do.

Babe. (wrathfully). There's trouble already. I can't put up this cheesecloth alone.

Bess. (giggling, in the door). Get Galliger to help you.

Mrs. S. Again I ast, is this the room I am to scrub?

Babe. (glaring at the girls). I suppose so, Mrs. Kitters. This is the library.

Mrs. S. (impressively). My name is Snitters. Bettie Snitters. Born Bettie Bowersocks. There ain't no more respetabler name in Rafton than Bowersocks. My father bore the name all his life—God rest him!—and never found no fault with it. And my husband belonged to the Snitterses of Columbus, and no more honorabler man than—

Mame. So long, Babe. We'll be back in about an hour. *(The girls go, giggling).*

Babe. Now, Mrs. Snitters, it does n't seem to me that this room needs anything. What else can you do? I think there is n't any scrubbing.

(GALLIGER appears at the door, and stands, unobserved.)

Mrs. S. (*striking an attitude*). In the sanity of me own home I can do anything. My poor husband useter say that he never seen a more handier woman. But when I go out by the day all I do is to scrub. Scrubbing is my speciality.

Babe. (*bending over her sewing*). But if there is no scrubbing to do, Mrs. Snitters, and we found some other way you could help us, you would now, would n't you?

Mrs. S. I was engaged by that young woman to scrub, and I am bound for to keep my contract. I allus does my dooty as far as I kin see it. My father wus a man that allus done his dooty. Never no man was more indisposed to do his dooty, than my father, Hezekiah Bowersocks. Many's the time I've heerd him say, his arms acrost like this, (*the mop crashes to the floor*), says he, his arms acrost, "The man that don't do his dooty is no man. That man can never assassinate with me and mine." Many's the time I've heerd him say, his arms acrost—

Babe. As I was about to say, Mrs. Snitters, if you had come three hours earlier, there might have been some scrubbing for you to do. But now, I don't know—

(GALLIGER advances into the room.)

Galliger. Good morning, Miss Woodward. Your humble and detached servant, (*picks up the mop*). Permit me, Madam. (*to Babe*). Are you making an ascension robe?

Babe. I'll need one if somebody does n't help me. I ought to be in the kitchen this minute. Look, that's all I've done this morning,—carry a few books from the table to the desk.

Galliger. (*grinning*). Prof's desk?

Babe. (*shrugging*). Prof's desk. Poor man, he might as well have stayed, for all I've got done. Mame's gone—she and Bess did n't do a thing but giggle!

Galliger. Cheer up. The Red Cross has dispatched three warships to the rescue. That cap is very fetching. But if you could wear it a little more on one side—just a trifle—

Babe. (*indignantly straightening her dust cap*). Oh, it's all very well to stand there and criticize other people! Why don't you do something?

Galliger. (*rolling up his sleeves and rumpling his hair*). Fair damsel, I come, I come! Lay on Macduff, and confusion 'light on him who says I've done enough! I'm ready to do anything, everything, nothing!

Mrs. S. (*much struck with Galliger's charms*). That's the way to talk. You remind me of my father, young man. I relly think you favor him about the eyes. He wus allus ready for to do his dooty. He useter say, a-crossin' his arms this a-way—

Babe. (*desperately*). Mrs. Snitters, how long will it take you to mop this floor?

Mrs. S. (*measuring the floor with her professional eye*). Well, I think, so far as I can decimate it, off-hand, it will take about thirty minutes.

Galliger. You are n't going to mop this floor, I hope? It does n't need anything. It's beautiful. I can see my face in it this minute—or I could if my face were lower down.

Mrs. S. It's a very good floor, young man, but I am indisposed for to do my dooty.

Babe. But it is n't your duty to mop a floor that does n't need it, Mrs. Kitters.

Mrs. S. (*with patient dignity*). Mrs. Snitters, if you please.

Babe. I beg pardon, Mrs. Snitters.

Mrs. S. (*with arms akimbo, her head a-cock*). Now let me tell you that no Bowersock born ever deluded his dooty in no sich way. I wus engaged for this day, and paid in advancement. Says the young woman wot engaged me, says that young woman: "We'll pay you

when the work is done, for I don't know how much there is to do." "No," says I, with firmness and derision, "No, I allus ast for my pay before I does the work. No pay, no work," says I. And when she seed my derision, she seed it was no use to arguify. (*She fishes some coins from a remote and obscure pocket*). There it is. One dollar and a half, good United States. I was engaged for to do a day's work, and paid liberal for the same. Scrubbin' is my work. I wasn't engaged to play the pianny.

Galliger. (*gravely*). I presume that is true, Mrs Snitters.

(*Enter MRS. GRINDEM.*)

Babe. Oh, Mrs. Grindem, do settle this! I am so mortified! It seems Mame thought we ought to help your maid out,—there being so much extra work, and all that, you know, and she hired this woman—

Mrs. S. (*with a courtsey, dropping her mop in the effort*). Mrs. Bettie Snitters, Madam, at your service.

Mrs. G. Ah, you are the woman the young ladies got to help us out?

Mrs. S. I am the scrub lady as wus reg-larly engaged by them two young wommin as wus just here. And I am come purpared for to do my dooty.

Galliger. (*picking up the mop*). Permit me, Mrs. Snitters.

Babe. You see we did n't know, Mrs. Grindem,—that is, we thought that she—or I mean, Mame thought—

Mrs. G. Don't be distressed, my dear Miss Margaret. It was lovely of you young ladies, very thoughtful, I'm sure, and I appreciate it. But poor Mary is in a dreadful way. She has been getting the house ready for the party for at least three days. She's very enthusiastic. Why, she actually got up at 5 o'clock this morning to shine the front door knobs!

Galliger. The Committee on the Distribution of Bouquets will not forget Mary. I'll give the matter my personal attention.

Babe. The house is in beautiful condition, Mrs. Grindem. It's too bad. I don't know how to apologize for our rudeness. But you must decide about this; it's your house.

Mrs. G. (smiling). Not today, Miss Margaret. I've turned it over entirely to you young folks. I am a guest, as Miss Cameron says, in my own house.

Galliger. (his hand on his heart). Miss Cameron is always graceful. Permit us to tender you the freedom of the city.

Babe. But what shall I do? This woman *will* scrub—

Galliger. Ask Mary if she can't help her. I'll bet Mary's doing ten different things right this minute!

Babe. Galliger, that's an inspiration! Mrs. Snitters, come with me.

(Enter MRS. MORTON, hastily.)

Mrs. G. What's the matter, Mother?

Mrs. M. The house is so upset! Have you seen my reading glasses? I've looked high and low for them. *(nods curtly to Galliger and Babe).*

Mrs. G. Have you looked in the dining-room?

Mrs. M. (plaintively). I can't get into the dining-room; they're decorating it. I thought I would sit out on the porch and read the paper. There's no place else to sit.

Mrs. G. Maybe they're in the kitchen. You had them when you hulled the strawberries for breakfast, you know. Have you looked on the dresser?

Mrs. M. (wearily, turning to go). I can't look in the kitchen. Mary's scrubbing the floor. *(Mrs. Snitters gesticulates violently to Babe).* I guess I'll take a walk, but it's so hot in the sun.

Mrs. G. No, you stay here, mother. Let me look for them. *(Mrs. Morton sits down with a gusty sigh, and Mrs. Grindem hurries out.)*

Babe. (sewing away). Poor Mrs. Morton, it's too bad. But it's only once a year, you know.

Mrs. S. (in some agitation). Let me scrub the kitching floor, and let the girl in the bib apron (*looks daggers at Galliger*) do them other nine things to onct!

Babe. Yes, you can do that, Mrs. Snitters. That's an excellent idea.—Galliger, you sit down here and finish these rosettes. There are only seven more to make. Sew them around this way, then fix them on the cheesecloth. This way. See? Every two yards; use the yard measure, to be sure, gather it up, and fasten a rosette there. See, like this one. Sew it over and over. They must n't drop off, first thing.

Galliger. I see. Complicated as the idea is, I think I grasp it in its entirety. (*Sits down and gathers up the cheesecloth*). From Errand Boy to House Decorator. The Story of a Short Life. In Five Volumes. Profusely Illustrated. Half Calf, \$2.50. Why, I can do this with my hand tied behind me.

Babe. Well, do it right.—Mrs. Morton, you will excuse me, I know.—Come, Mrs. Snitters. (*They go, MRS SNITTERS with much clatter.*)

Galliger. (sewing away with much earnestness). That woman comes of a family of famous scrubbers. They have scrubbed for the best families here and abroad. She even hinted that she had scrubbed for the nobility,—or at least that her great grandmother had. But of course that was years ago when the nobility was not so stuck up. When the dirt got too thick they up and called in a Bowersocks and had it scrubbed off. Of course there's nothing disgraceful in dirt—a little dirt. It's only the accumulation that becomes a—a menace to society.

Mrs. M. (fanning herself complacently with a newspaper). Who is the woman? Do you know her family?

Galliger. (intent upon threading his needle). Yes, we've known them for years. That is, we've known of them. Of course the two families never visited back and forth of any account.

Mrs. M. (serenely). Of course not.

Galliger. (with much gravity). Well, this woman's

father, Hezekiah Bowersock, was a fine character. He used to stand like those pictures of Napoleon at St. Helena, his arms folded, you know, and—

Mrs. M. Bowersocks! Why, I know some people of that name! Do you suppose they are related to the Bowersocks of Newton? She's a D. A. R.

Galliger. (*measuring cheesecloth with exact nicety*). It's probably a branch of the same family.

Mrs. M. Poor soul! And now she's a scrub woman! These misfortunes in our first families are appalling! And how nobly she bears it! I thought there was something remarkable about her face. What happened her father?

Galliger. (*leaning back*). This woman's father, Hezekiah Bowersocks, was a lieutenant under General Longstreet, and during the war his family suffered—

Mrs. M. But the Bowersocks are a Northern family.

Galliger. (*with empressement*). That was the queer thing about this man. Raised in the North, amid all the luxury of—er—boundless wealth, he sympathized with the South, and when war was declared he—he offered his services to the Confederacy.

Mrs. M. (*with a gratified sigh*). He evidently was a thoroughly honest man. It would be well for the country if there were more like him.

Galliger. It certainly would, Madam. I have often thought that what this country needs is honest men, strong, capable, far-seeing men.

Mrs. M. Yes, men of conviction. I have said so myself. But go on about her father.

Galliger. Oh yes. Well,—er—what was I saying about her father

Mrs. M. You were saying he offered his services to the Confederacy—

Galliger. (*resuming his work*). Yes, he offered his services to the Confederacy, and when he returned after the war he found—

(Enter MRS. GRINDEM.)

Mrs. G. Mother, here are your glasses. And here's the paper. Now you can sit on the porch.—Still at work, I see, Mr. Gurdy?

Mrs. M. (*rising with evident reluctance*). I'm afraid he has been losing time, but he has entertained me beautifully. I had forgotten all about my glasses.—Some other time, Mr. Galliger, you must tell me the rest of the story.

Galliger. (*rising*). With pleasure, Mrs. Morton, with pleasure.

Mrs. M. (*sweeping toward the door in her grand way*). We shall see you tonight, of course, Mr. Galliger?

Galliger. (*bowing*). Oh, certainly, Mrs. Morton.

Mrs. M. Goodbye till then. (*The ladies go.*)

Galliger. (*reseating himself*). Gullible old party. I always thought Longstreet was a Northern general, but maybe she's right. It's a good thing Mrs. Grindem appeared. I was about spun out. . . I wonder how many thousand yards of this stuff there are? I've sewed about six miles of it, I think. (*He stitches away soberly for a little, then in comes Mary in a high state of exasperation.*)

Mary. Where's that young lady in the pink dress?

Galliger. (*imperturbably*). She's probably still in the pink dress.

Mary. I want to see her right off. I won't stand this no longer, so there!

Galliger. Stand which? Sit down while you're standing it, why don't you?

Mary. I want that young lady in the pink dress.

Galliger. (*suspending his work, and gazing at her thoughtfully*). Pink dress—pink dress. Has n't she any other personal peculiarity?

Mary. (*beginning to cry*). I don't remember any—only she has the b—b—beautifullest eyes!

Galliger. Oh, you mean Miss Woodward. I don't know where she is. Why?

Mary. She's got to come and t—take that Mrs. Fritters away. She wants to scrub the kitching, and it's been scrubbed. I jes' got through, and it aint even dry yet. I guess I know how to scrub. I was n't raised in a barn myself! She comes in with her bucket, and sniffs, and walks around this way (*illustrates*), and talks about her "dooty." She's afraid she won't get to keep that money; that's what's the matter with her! Wanting to scrub the kitching again! I won't stand it, so there!

Galliger. Well, well, be quiet about it. We'll murder her in secret, and hide her in the woodshed. What can Miss Woodward do when you find her?

Mary. She can send her home. I won't stand it. I'll pack my trunk and go first!

(*Enter MRS. SNITTERS, mop in hand.*)

Mrs. S. (*advancing with confidence*). All right, pack yer trunk. I aint indisposed to keep any self-respectin' girl from packin' her trunk. Pack it an' welcome. I only ast the privilege of doin' my dooty. I was hired to scrub an'—

Mary. (*tossing her head*). I'm tired of hearin' about your old "dooty!" I guess other people do their "dooty" as well as you!

Galliger. (*pacifically*). It seems to me, under the circumstances—

Mrs. S. (*to Mary*). I won't be talked back to by any young woman of your size! I never permit impercence, young woman, mind that.

Mary. Oh, you don't! And how do you help yourself, Madam? You'll be talked back to jes' as much as I want to say, Mrs. Fritters, I tell you those. If you think there was n't any work done in this house till you come, you're off your base, that's all I got to say.

Galliger. (*more pacifically*). Mrs. Fritters, it would be much the better way—

Mrs. S. (*wrathfully*). Young man, my name is Snit-

ters; S-n-i-t-t-e-r-s. I thank you for to call me by my name. (*wheeling on Mary*). I never said there was n't.

Mary. (*loftily*). Well, you intimidated it. It's all the same.

Mrs. S. (*advancing toward her*). I did n't intimidate no sich thing. I aint a woman to intimidate things. What I mean I say right out.

Mary. (*advancing a step*). You did.

Mrs. S. (*firmly*). I did n't.

Galliger. (*rising, the cheesecloth clinging to him as a drapery*). Mrs. Snitters, if you will kindly come with me—

Mrs. S. (*to Mary*). If you say I intimidated there wus n't no work done in this house, you say what aint so.

Mary. You did.

Mrs. S. (*grasping her mop more firmly*). You say I say what aint so.

Mary. (*backing off a little*). You did, you did, you did!

Mrs. S. (*following her, the mop upraised*). I won't stand for your imperence. (*Mary dodges, turns, and escapes through the door, closely pursued by the vengeful Mrs. Snitters.*)

Galliger (*dashes after them, the cheesecloth clinging to him*). The Lord save us!

CURTAIN

ACT II

(The Kitchen of the Grindem Home, three o'clock, the Afternoon of the Same Day. The usual effects of "a doin's" present in the variegated confusion. BABE WOODWARD, in an enormous gingham apron, washing dishes, GALLIGER drying them.)

Babe. *(bathing a plate with a long-handled dish mop).* I think these dishes are awfully ugly.

Galliger. So do I, but it's the only kind he'd let me have. I picked out some mighty swell ones, with houses on 'em and saw bucks, and trees, but he said he did n't rent them.

Babe. Saw-bucks! For pity sakes! Are you sure they were saw-bucks?

Galliger. *(polishing a plate with great flourish).* I guess I know a saw-buck when I see one.

Babe. *(after a meditative pause and cessation from work).* Saw-bucks. What color were they?

Galliger. *(leaning resignedly against the table).* Blue—the blue like your mother used to wash with. Give me another plate.

Babe. Oh, you mean delft! That's beautiful. I should say the man would n't rent his delft ware! They're windmills, not sawbucks. Holland windmills.

Galliger. Windmills! That's just like a girl! Because it's a swell pattern, girls call 'em windmills!

Babe. I guess I know a windmill when I see one.

Galliger. Oh, yes, I suppose you've seen millions of 'em in Holland! Hurry up! You've bathed that plate long enough.

Babe. *(successfully landing the plate).* You let me alone. I'm washing these dishes. We've got to be very, very particular. How do we know who had them last?

Galliger. If it's such a big job, why did n't you let Mary do it?

Babe. It is n't a big job; it's a particular job. We

have n't any idea who ate off these dishes last. Besides, I think we girls should do the extra work.

Galliger. Why don't you let Mrs. Snitters do it? By the way, where is that Daughter of the Revolution?

Babe. Revolution against dirt, you mean? I left her arguing with Mary about the proper way to wash windows.

Galliger. Who's washing windows at this time of day?

Babe. Nobody, only Mrs. Snitters said it ought to be done one way, and Mary said it ought to be done another way. Mary would rather die than agree with her. I suppose there's only one way to wash windows.

Galliger. There'll be bloodshed. You mark my words. I only narrowly averted it this morning. (*He walks to a chair*). I'll sit down between acts. When you've finished bathing the next plate, let me know. (*Strumming an imaginary guitar, he sings with fervor*).

“. . . And 'twas from Aunt Dinah's quilting party
I was seeing Nellie home.”

Babe. I thought you were going to dry these dishes.

Galliger. I am drying those dishes. I have dried every dish that you have washed, and I hope to live long enough to dry the rest. But I have a right to amuse myself in the intervals of honest toil. If you want more continuous service, let us have more continuous plates. (*sings*). “I was seeing Nellie home . . . It was from Aunt Dinah's quilting party I was seeing Nellie home.” Is the next plate ready? I say, Central, hello! . . . Hello! Give me Professor Grindem's, please . . . Has the lady finished the next plate? . . . She has? I thank you. (*He goes to the table*). Ah, an accumulation of three! Here's where we get in some heavy work!

(*Enter MARY.*)

Mary. Miss, Perfesser Wright says may he speak to you jes' a minute?

Babe. Professor Wright? Are you sure he said me?

Mary. Yessum, Miss Woodward, he said, and he says it's very particular.

Babe. Oh, my goodness! And look at me! I'm a fright! (*tries to untie her apron*).

Mary. Lemme finish them dishes, Miss. I ain't got a thing to do now.

Babe. Galliger, untie this knot.—Mary, you go and tell him I'll be there in a minute. Where is he?

Mary. A-standin' in the front hall. There aint anywheres he can set down. (*goes*).

Babe. Hurry up. How do I look?

Galliger. Not any worse than usual, I think. Stand still, why don't you?

Babe. Hurry up. I suppose he's in a rush. I can't imagine what he wants.

Galliger. (*struggling with the knot*). No, a girl's imagination usually fails at such a crisis. I'll have to cut it. Wait till I get my knife.

Babe. (*darting out of reach*). Horrors, you must n't cut it! It's Mrs. Grindem's. And I can't wear it. I'm fright enough without this. I'll have to slip it over my head. There, now, look at my hair! I'm in a pretty condition to see Professor Wright! It's a pity you could n't untie a simple knot!

Galliger. (*starting for the door*). I'll go tell him you're in a dead faint.

Babe. Galliger Gurdy, you stay right here! I'll go myself. (*She flirts out.*)

Galliger. (*gazing into space*). Now what the dickens does Wright want to see Babe Woodward for? (*He polishes a plate absently, his thoughts elsewhere.*)

(*Enter MRS GRINDEM, holding her handkerchief to her head.*)

Mrs. G. I thought Miss Margaret was here.

Galliger. (*starting from his preoccupation*). Oh, Mrs. Grindem, pardon me. Why, what is the matter? Do sit down. (*brings a chair*).

Mrs. G. No, I must go and lie down awhile. It's nothing but a little headache.

Galliger. But let me get you something. I'll run to the drug store in a jiffy. There's lots of things for headache. I often get them for mother.

Mrs. G. No, I thank you. It's just one of my nervous headaches. The least excitement brings them on.

Galliger. But do sit down. (*She docs.*) And please let me get you something. You must n't be sick tonight, you know. It would spoil the reception. Do you ever take headache tablets?

Mrs. G. No, I never take anything. Two hours' sleep will make me all right.

Galliger (*getting a glass of water*). Won't you have some water? Will you be able to stand in line tonight, do you think?

Mrs. G. Yes, indeed. Don't mention that I am sick. I came to speak to Miss Margaret.

Galliger. She'll be here in a minute, but you can leave any message with me.

Mrs. G. Then will you please tell her that I think it would be best to pay that Mrs. Fritters, and dismiss her.

Galliger. What's the matter? Is she rowing with Mary?

Mrs. G. Yes, or Mary's rowing with her. Anyway, they don't get on, and I think she had better go home. She doesn't seem to be a very—er—versatile woman.

Galliger. Does she insist upon scrubbing?

Mrs. G. (*wearily*). Oh, yes, it seems she's a wonderful scrubber, and she blows about what she can do, and Mary blows back, and then they have it. And Mother—Mrs. Morton, you know, has got some crazy notion in her head about the poor woman—thinks she knows some of Mrs. Fritter's people in Newton. Oh dear, it's so ridiculous! Mother says she's related to the Bowersocks family.

Galliger. (*respectfully*). Yes, Ma'am.

Mrs. G. (*rising*.) I can't have Mother talking to the charwoman, you know. How would it look? She'll have to go, and then, maybe, I can get a little peace. I don't dare leave Mother a minute while that woman is in the house—she'd waylay her and ask what relation she is to the Bowersock's family. Where *do* you suppose she got the notion?

Galliger. I can't imagine. Hasn't she—er told you?

Mrs. G. I haven't asked her. It's too ridiculous. You'll please tell Miss Margaret?

Galliger. I will, Mrs. Grindem. Hadn't I better go with you?

Mrs. G. No, thank you. I don't want anybody to know I have a headache.

Galliger. I'll hunt up Miss Woodward, (*They go*)
(*Enter, from the opposite door, MILLIE CAMERON and FRANK SAWYER.*)

Millie. Why, there's nobody here! You said they were washing dishes!

Frank. They were washing dishes, Miss Secretary, not thirty minutes ago. And here are the dishes.

Millie. It looks as if they had left unexpectedly. She just stepped out of that apron.

Frank. (*contemplating Babe's apron on the floor*). Gone but not forgotten. Sacred to the memory of Babe Woodward, who departed this kitchen June 9th, 1909 at half-past three o'clock. Verily, their works do follow them.

Millie. (*who has been peeping into divers open bags on the table*). It certainly looks like a party 'round here. Lump sugar. Lump sugar. Peppermint creams. Macaroons. Mr. President, may I have a macaroon?

Frank. Help yourself, Miss Secretary. Who made up the bill of particulars?

Millie. Babe Woodward. She is Chairman of the Committee on Refreshments.

Frank. (*peeping into the bags*). Thought Galliger was. English walnuts. My favorite confection.

Millie. He is not on the Committee—officially. Did you say English walnuts?

Frank. Oh, I suppose he belongs to the Kitchen Cabinet. The walnuts are n't cracked, but here is a can of deviled ham. Will you partake?

Millie. Oh, here's a chocolate cake!

Frank. (*looking into the box*). Let's cut it. I dare you! We ought to sample it, anyway. I am the President of this class. (*rummages in the table drawer*).

Millie. The peppermint creams are very good. What are you doing?

Frank. Looking for a knife to cut that cake. I hate to eat it all. (*shuts the drawer with a bang*.) Gee whiz, there goes the sugar! Catch it!

Millie. You'll catch it! It's mostly on the table. Here, let me take it up. Give me a spoon. Quick! If Babe Woodward sees this they'll be all kinds of trouble.

Frank. Can't they use it again? Hurry up. Suppose we don't cut the cake.

Millie. (*shrugging her shoulders*). Suppose we don't. I think it'll be just as well.

Frank. Have another macaroon.

(*Enter GALLIGER, whistling softly.*)

Galliger. (*stopping all over, all at once*). Hello!

Frank. Hello, Galliger! We thought you had deserted the ship.

Galliger. (*standing still, but all-observing*). Not yet. I just stepped out to quell a mutiny in the steerage. What are you doing? Taking an inventory?

Frank. (*taking a macaroon arily*). Miss Secretary and I are making a tour of inspection. We are now testing the rations. The parlor is ready. The library is decorated. The dining-room progresses. The front steps have been scrubbed twice, and I have ordered the furnace painted green. What can you report?

Galliger. (*saluting*). Mr. President; I have the honor to report:—

1 chocolate cake, 2 pound cakes, 4 dozen macaroons, (minus the number Miss Cameron has recently eaten), enough lady fingers to go 'round, I hope coffee, sugar, (in bags and on the floor), deviled ham, pickles, peppermints, olives, paper napkins, spoons, bread and butter to match, and ice cream in transit. All of which, Mr. President, I have the honor to report as not injurious to the most delicate constitution. Malted milk will be served to Freshmen, instead of coffee, and those preferring prunes to pickles will be shown the door.

Respectfully submitted,

GALLIGER GURDY, R. S. V. P.

Millie. Mr. President, I have eaten three macaroons and two peppermint creams.

Frank. Do you wish to make a minority report?

(*Re-enter* BABE.)

Galliger (*bowing to Babe*). Mr. President and Miss Secretary on an official tour of inspection. In your absence I made the report.

Babe. (*calmly, picking up her apron*). What report?

Galliger. The report of the Committee on Refreshments.

Babe. (*going to the dishpan*). Well, I hope it was satisfactory.

Frank. It was, perfectly so, Miss Woodward. I commend your pains. As they say in Shakespeare, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant."

Babe. (*coolly and impersonally*). They say a good many things in Shakespeare.—Galliger, we've got to finish these dishes.

Galliger. The water's stone cold.

Millie. Well, since you're getting along so nicely, I think we had better go.

Frank We will visit other—and less pleasant—fields of endeavor. What time are you all going home?

Galliger. Oh, about five, I guess. (*to Babe*). Are n't you?

Babe. (*with virtuous severity*). I shall go when I get through with my work, not before.

Frank. (*chanting*). "Dare to be a Daniel,
Dare to stand alone,
Dare to have a purpose firm,
Dare to make it known!"

Babe. You'd better go put up those ribbons, Frank Sawyer. The dining-room is n't nearly finished.

Frank. Those dost counsel well. So long. We'll see you at five, remember. My treat at the first soda fountain.

Millie. Galliger, don't forget to subtract those three macaroons. (*They go.*)

Babe. (*washing dishes*). Did Millie Cameron help herself to macaroons?

Galliger. (*cheerfully*). No, Frank hooked some.

Babe. I'm glad they did n't find the chocolate creams. I see they upset the sugar.

Galliger. (*with nonchalant irrelevance*). By the way, what did Wright want?

Babe. He wanted to know if he could send me some flowers for tonight.

Galliger. He did? He did? The addlepate! (*drops a plate with a crash*).

Babe. (*surveying the ruins*). We'll have to pay for that.

Galliger. I'll pay for it. I can pay for three bushels of stone plates, if necessary.

Babe. Now, supposing it had been Mrs. Grindem's best china? I knew how it would be. You ought to be more careful.

Galliger. But it is n't Mrs. Grindem's best china, so what's the use of saying that? What did you tell him?

Babe. Tell who?

Galliger. Wright.

Babe. Oh, Professor Wright? About the flowers, you mean? I told him yes.

Galliger. (*slowly, gazing at her as if she were n't there at all*). You told him that he could—could send you flowers for tonight?

Babe. (*cheerfully*). That's all the dishes. Thank you very much. I'm glad they're done. (*She bustles around, doing things, Galliger standing still, looking at nothing in particular*). Do you know, really, I hate to wash dishes, just hate to.

Galliger. (*slowly*). You told him that he could—could send you flowers for tonight?

Babe. (*airily*). Why not?

Galliger. Because you told me that I might send you flowers for tonight.

Babe. Can a girl ever have too many flowers?

Galliger. (*dropping the tea towel in a heap, and turning to the door*). Maybe not. But she can have too many—subscribers.

Babe. Galliger, you're a goose.

Galliger. (*at the door*). I am. I think there is no question about that.

Babe. Come back, and I'll tell you about it.

Galliger. You have told me about it.

Babe. I have n't told you the truth about it.

Galliger. (*his back to her*). How do I know, now, what is the truth? How am I to know when you are telling the truth hereafter?

Babe. Galliger, you can't say things like that to me. I don't tell lies. (*Galliger does not answer*). I was . . . I was joking about the flowers.

Galliger (*turning like a flash*). Honest, Babe Woodward?

Babe. Honest?

Galliger (*solemnly*). Cross your heart and hope to die?

Babe. (*quite as solemnly*). Cross my heart and hope to die.

Galliger. (*starting for her*). How was it! Tell me.

Babe. (*taking refuge behind the table*). Oh, he wanted to know if I thought it would be proper for him to send Mrs. Grindem some flowers for tonight, as she is hostess and all that, you know. He is so horribly cautious he had to consult somebody. And he was so scared he could hardly talk. He'll die of fright yet, that man.

Galliger (*joyously, starting around the table*). And you told him—

Babe. (*springing in the opposite direction*). I told him it would (*dodging him adroitly*) would be a very nice thing for him to do. And I really think it would, don't you?

Galliger. (*dodging around desperately*). I think you are a—

(*Enter MRS. MORTON, with a small pasteboard box.*)

Mrs. M. Another cake, addressed to The Chairman of the Refreshment Committee. That's you, is n't it, Mr. Galliger?

Galliger. No, Miss Woodward is Chairman of the Committee. I'm not anything in particular.

Mrs. M. Oh, excuse me, I thought it was you. Can't I do something to help you? I'm *so* interested, you can't think!

Babe. Why, no, thank you, Mrs. Morton, I believe not. Everything is about done.

Mrs. M. (*looking at the table*). I'm sure I can help you. I used to be very fond of spreading sandwiches. Always at a picnic I was the one to spread the sandwiches, because I spread the butter on both slices, and the boys liked that. This all reminds me of the times we used to have at home. I was a very popular girl—very popular. Mother used to say it was a shame the way I used to get so many flowers. Some of the girls did n't get any from year's end to year's end. But that

is the way of the world; some have so much and some have so little.

Galliger. Yes, Madam, it is so indeed.

Mrs. M. (*to Babe*). Are you going to have sandwiches?

Babe. Yes, Mrs. Morton, but I don't want to spread them until tonight. It's so hard to keep them fresh.

Mrs. M. We could keep them in a stone jar. You ought n't to leave everything till the last minute. It's after four now.

Babe. But I'll have to be in the kitchen most of the time, anyway.

Galliger. I don't see why you have to be in the kitchen most of the time. Let Mrs. Morton help you with them. It'll be a big job.

Babe. (*with a wicked smile*). I tell you what you can do, Mrs. Morton. You can help Galliger crack these walnuts. You take the hulls off after he cracks them, you know. Would you like to do that?

Galliger (*looking at butcher knives at Babe*). Oh, I would n't think of letting Mrs. Morton do such heavy work.

Babe. (*with that same wicked smile*). Mrs. Morton is right; we must n't leave everything to the last minute.—Sit right here, Mrs. Morton. Let me put this apron on you. Oh, that's all right; I'm done with it, thank you, and it's nice and clean. (*Galliger watches these preparations with covert dismay*). Now, keep this dish in your lap for the nuts, and this—here—for the shells. (*to Galliger*). Do you want a hammer, or will you crack them with the cracker?

Galliger. You are n't going to make poor Mrs. Morton pick out two pounds of English walnuts, are you?

Mrs. M. Oh, but I like to do it. I've been hoping all day that somebody would let me do something.—Where are you going to sit, Mr. Galliger?

Babe. (*pleasantly*). Oh, it does n't matter much where *he* sits. Boys can perch 'most anywhere. (*She*

clears a chair of its freight of parcels.) Here, Galliger, sit here. Do you need an apron?

Galliger. Anything will do me. I use a nailkeg at home.

Mrs. M. (*holding the dish expectantly, eager to begin*). - A nailkeg! Just fancy! Do you like it better than a chair?

Galliger. Lots better. Got used to it when I was a child.

Babe. Sit down, Galliger. We have n't any nailkegs. Now, please try not to break them. That is, get them out in while halves. Please be careful.

Galliger. (*helplessly*). Whole halves. Twice two is five. All right, drive on. Are you all ready, Mrs. Morton?

Babe. (*fussing about them in extreme solicitude*). Are you comfortable, Mrs. Morton? If you are tired, stop. Galliger can finish them.—*Galliger*, I told you to be careful. You mashed that one. We want to serve them whole, I said.

Galliger. (*looking more than he says*). - I mashed my finger, too. I would like to have it served whole, if you don't mind. I'd rather have the hammer and a flat-iron, then I can mash my knee all I want to.

Babe. (*supplying him with both*). There now, go easy. They are n't rocks. Well, if you people are all right, I'll go help in the dining-room. Remember, Mrs. Morton, if you get tired, you are to quit.

Mrs. M. I won't get tired. I am only too glad to help you.

Babe. Don't work too hard, remember. (*Goes*.)

Mrs. M. I'm so glad to be able to do something for the party. Everybody has been so busy today. Everybody but me. Oh, that reminds me. I wanted to talk to that Mrs. Snitters; to try and draw her out, you know, but I could n't get an opportunity. Somebody was always around. I think she looks a little like Fanny Bowersocks, the third daughter. She has the same sort of

nose. Noses tell so much. Why, I've see a nose run through three generations—and through a whole photograph album of dead relations.

Galliger. (cracking nuts). Yes, Mrs. Morton.

Mrs. M. But I don't know that noses tell more than chins. What do you think? Some people say that family likeness is mostly in the chin. I've read that in lots of books. But you can't believe everything in books. Now I have my mother's chin right over again, and so has Martha.

Galliger. (cracking nuts). Yes, Mrs. Morton.

Mrs. M. (cheerfully, innocently). But you really can't tell much about chins, or noses, either, so far as that goes. It does n't matter what a man's chin is, or which grandfather's chin he has, if his principles are good. That's what I believe; it's his principles that count, not his chin. Though of course if he has n't any chin, he is n't likely to have any principles. Paul Slide had n't any chin, and you know how he turned out. Have you read that book?

Galliger. (cracking nuts). No, Mrs. Morton.

Mrs. M. You have n't read "Sweet Cicely?" Oh, you must. It's a very good book for boys. *(rises).* I'll bring you that book right now while I think of it. It won't take but a minute. You keep right on cracking; I can catch up. And you must promise me to read every word.

Galliger. Yes, Mrs. Morton. Thank you. *(She goes. In a second, Frank Sawyer steps in the doorway, smiling blandly.)*

Frank. Five o'clock, Galliger.

Galliger. (without looking up). I know it. Go on. Don't wait. I'll be along.

Frank. What's the matter?

Galliger. STUNG !

CURTAIN

ACT III

(The Parlor of the Grindem Home, at half-past seven, the Evening of the Same Day. Two or three chairs in the room, and pennants and flowers. Professor Wright is discovered sitting on the edge of a chair, waiting for something—anything!—to happen. Enter MILLIE CAMERON, in evening gown.)

Millie. Good evening, Professor. Are you alone?

Wright. *(rising as one piece).* Yes, Miss Cameron, or that is, there is nobody with me.

Millie. *(seating herself).* Mrs. Grindem will be down in a minute. She asked me to tell you. You know she has had to fight a headache all afternoon.

Wright. *(reseating himself with much uncertainty).* Yes, I—er—that is, Miss Woodward told me that Mrs. Grindem was—er indisposed. I was glad to be informed—or I mean I was sorry to be informed she was ill, but I was glad to be—er advised of the fact. That is, I would say I was happy not to be kept in ignorance of—er the fact of her indisposition.

Millie. *(toying with a tiny fan).* Oh, yes, she's all right now. I suppose it was the excitement. We've had such a day! How do you like the decorations?

Wright. *(moping his glowing brow).* I think they are very remarkable.

Millie. "Remarkable?" Oh, Professor! And we tried so hard! I spent most of the day on the stepladder, though I did come down for luncheon. I thought you would say, "They are beautiful!" But you never flatter people—not even when they expect it. How do you mean they are "remarkable?"

Wright. *(looking toward the door).* Remarkably beautiful, Miss Cameron. You did not permit me to finish. I consider the artistic effect—er most artistic.

Millie. Well, I certainly am glad you think so. I was quite frightened. I thought, "Well, if Professor Wright, with his cultivated taste, does n't like them—

Wright. (hastily). I—I have no cultivated taste, Miss Cameron, I do assure you. I beg you to believe—I do earnestly beg you to believe that I—er disclaim any such possession. I should not dream of assuming any such—er superiority.

Millie. (fanning herself in a very elegant manner). Ah, Professor, you are too modest. We all know your taste. That's the reason I was so depressed when I thought you did n't like them. You know we like to please the people who will appreciate—

(Enter BESSIE TAPPING, in haste, putting on her long gloves.)

Bess. Well, I've had the time of my life tonight! I don't know whether it's today or the day before yesterday! Everything went wrong—you know how things do sometimes. I did n't get the souvenirs done until after six, and then my dress did n't come, and did n't come, and did n't come! We had to 'phone for it twice. I was in a perfect stew! Mrs. Mitchell can never make another dress for me. You hear me say!

Millie. There's plenty of time. It is n't eight yet.

Bess. Well, I should hope it was n't!—Professor, will you button my gloves? Please. I'm so nervous I never can.

Wright. (rising). I shall be—er delighted, Miss Tapping.

Bess. They're awfully tight. We ought to have a buttonhook. They're my sister's; I could n't find mine high nor low. Go on, don't mind hurting me. My arms are so burned that I just got to wear them. Mother says the next time the Seniors give a Reception, she's going to leave town. Ough! Don't button the first button. Try the next one.

Wright. That was the next one. I hesitate, Miss Tapping, to compress your wrist to the necessary extent—

Bess. Oh, don't mind me. Go on, button the first one. I reckon I can stand it. I got to, that's all. *(To*

Millie). You look awful nice, honest you do; and so cool and comfortable. Is my back hair all right?

Millie. (*rising*). Turn around. I like your dress.

Bess. I'm glad you do. Goodness knows, I've worried enough about it. But how is my hair? (*She revolves slowly, Wright following her, bent over the glove.*)

Millie. It looks all right, but is it safe?

Bess. What do you mean by "safe?" It's as safe as anybody's, I reckon. It can't fall off, if that's what you mean. It's all mine—all fast to my head, you know.

Wright. If you do not stand still, Miss Tapping, I shall not be able—

Bess. (*who has been cranning her neck to see her hair in a distant mirror*). Oh, I beg your pardon, Professor Wright. Of course you can't. My, that's tight, is n't it?

Wright. (*straightening up*). It is very much—er compressed, Miss Tapping. I should say—you will pardon my giving expression to a personal opinion, I should say you were unwise to risk injuring your health in this way. The wrist, as you are doubtless aware, is very sensitive to the slightest pressure, and—

(*Enter MAME HENSELL, as from the street.*)

Bess. Hello, Mame, did you just come?

Mame. (*bowing distantly to Wright*). Yes, and I thought I'd never make it in the world. I'm tired enough to drop. Where's the Chairman of the Refreshment Committee?

Bess. In the kitchen, spreading sandwiches. Anything wrong? (*to Wright*). I think this one is worse than the other, don't you?

Wright. I am of the opinion that such is the case.

(*Mame smiles at Millie, and goes out.*)

Millie. Why don't you use a string? A white one would n't show, do you think?

(Enter GALLIGER, hat in hand.)

Galliger. Good evening, Professor. Ladies, I hope I see you well. You certainly look the part. Where's everybody? I miss Mary's pleasant smile and reprehensible grammar. Is n't she going to 'tend the door? It's wide open now.

Bess. Later on she is, of course. She's helping Babe in the kitchen now.

Galliger. Miss Woodward in the kitchen? Can such things be? What's she doing? I labored nineteen hours this afternoon solely that Miss Woodward might get out of the kitchen.

Millie. She is n't cracking walnuts, I'm sure. They're all cracked.

Galliger. Please do not speak of walnuts. The subject's a painful one to me. See that thumb? It has n't a bit of feeling. It won't be in commission for a week.—May I ask, Professor Wright, the precise nature of Miss Tapping's trouble?

Wright. (*straightening up*). I am buttoning Miss Tapping's glove.

Galliger. Ah, pardon me. I apprehended it was of a more serious nature.

(Enter BABE WOODWARD, *an enveloping white apron over her pretty evening gown*.)

Babe. How many sandwiches do you think I ought to make?

Galliger. Enough to go 'round three times.

Babe. Did n't you have any dinner?—Good evening, Professor Wright. I'm glad you've come. I was afraid you would forget. Where's Mrs. Grindem? Who put those red roses there? The combination's awful! Bess, your hair's coming down.

Bess. Oh no it is n't. It only looks as if it would. It's all the rage.—Thank you, Professor. (*sinks into a chair*). I'm worn to a thread, I declare.

Babe. (*readjusting a vase of red roses*). Everybody ought to be here. It's nearly eight o'clock. Mary wants

to wear a long white apron, after we went and got her that cute little round one!

Galliger. (*who has been talking aside with Millie*). Mrs. Snitters has been the ruination of Mary. I felt it would be so. I said to myself this morning, after Mrs. Snitters told us about her family, I said, "Herein do I behold Mary's finish!"—I believe you did not meet Mrs. Snitters, Professor Wright?

Wright. I believe not, Galliger. That is, I do not at present recall meeting any such—er person.

Galliger. Yours is the loss, Professor, yours is the loss. I think I can say without exaggeration that I never met a lady of more remarkable talents. I had the pleasure, this morning, of an hour's conversation—

(*Enter MRS. GRINDEM.*)

"See, see, our honored hostess!" Mrs. Grindem, yours to command.

Mrs. G. Good evening, everybody. Professor Wright, we are very glad to see you. (*She talks with him, apart.*)

Babe. Where is Professor? You people ought to be in line this minute. Galliger, go get him.

Galliger. I don't think I ought to get him. This is his house. He knows enough to come when he's ready.

Babe. And the President is n't here. I never knew Frank Sawyer to be on time in my life! Suppose somebody were to come!

Bess. (*adjusting hairpins*). The invitations said eight o'clock. I think we ought to get in line.

Galliger. You can't get in line without Prof.

Mrs. G. (*turning to the group*). Mr. Grindem is dressing. He got home late. Of course the Board had to meet. The Board always meets when we want him home early.

Galliger. Mrs. Grindem, have you a slicker in the house?

Mrs. G. A slicker, Mr. Gurdy? I have n't seen a slicker for years and years. What do you want with a slicker?

Galliger. I want to borrow it for Miss Woodward. Poor girl, she is ashamed of her dress, and that apron does n't quite cover it.

Wright. (*with unexpected spirit*). I think Miss Woodward looks very charming in that apron. I am rather fond of aprons.

Babe. (*beaming on him*). Thank you, Professor. I'm glad somebody appreciates the cook. You shall have a rose for that. (*She takes one from a vase, and pins it in his coat lapel.*) Do you like to spread sandwiches?

Galliger. (*with more haste than politeness*). Oh, I forgot, I promised to help you with those sandwiches. Come on, we may as well get them done.

(FRANK SAWYER appears at the door.)

Babe. Frank Sawyer, do you know what time it is?

Frank. Time for the party. Why are n't you people in line to receive me? (*He comes into the room*). Good evening, Mrs. Grindem. You look as if you had never heard tell of a headache. (*shakes hands with Professor Wright*). Is the party about ready to begin to commence?

Millie. (*turning from Galliger*). I think we ought to arrange the line. Somebody might come, you know.

Bess. Don't let's have any line. They're so stiff and ridiculous.

Frank. It would n't be a reception without a line. The line is what distinguishes the reception from any other form of merry-making.

Galliger. The clothes line, you mean, I presume.

Frank. Speaking of clothes, is that your hat, my son?

Galliger. This hat? Why, do you want to borrow it?

Frank. I thought we might use it for exhibition purposes. That seems to be your idea.

Galliger. Really, Mr. President, I had n't thought about it. I suppose a man may hold his hat in his hand without laying claim to an idea of that magnitude.

(Enter PROFESSOR GRINDEM.)

Babe. (flying at him). Professor, you stand there.

Grindem. (bowing to the young ladies). What am I to stand here for, 'way off from everybody? I'd much rather go over there and stand by Miss Cameron.

Frank. (stepping to Millie's side). Permit me to be your proxy, Professor.

Gal. Be as foxy as you want to, but don't queer the deal. (to Babe). Go on with the line.

Babe. We're getting the line formed, you know. You're to stand at the head. (places him in position).

Girndem. (meekly). Oh, I am.

Bess. I think Mrs. Grindem ought to stand first. She's hostess.—Don't you think you ought, Mrs. Grindem?

Mrs. G. (who has been talking aside with Wright). Whatever you think. Why not let the President stand first? It's the Senior Class receiving, really.

Babe. (gazing from one to the other). It's the Senior Reception, and Mrs. Grindem is hostess, but (an affectionate and eloquent pause) Professor is Professor.

Galliger. Amen! Professor is Professor, therefore he comes first. First in war, first in peace, and first in the line of his fellow-sufferers.

Frank. Everybody in favor of Prof.'s standing first in line, signify—

Millie. That's no way to settle it. We ought to do the proper thing. Has n't anybody a book on etiquette?

Galliger. (searching his pockets). Mine must be in my other coat. That's the trouble of having two coats.

Frank. I have a Complete Letter Writer at home.

Grindem. (gravely). What we need is a book on precedents. Surely Blackstone has something on the subject.

Galliger. Ruth Ashmore could put us right. Only, she's dead. Poor girl, she knew everything!

Bess. (*who has been arguing with Babe on the side*). The hostess should always come first in her own house. If the President were here, he would come *after* Mrs. Grindem.

Frank. I have not demanded to come *before* Mrs. Grindem, have I?

Babe. (*scornfully*). She means the President of the United States, not *you*.—Mrs. Grindem, stand first, please.

Frank. (*offering his arm to Mrs. Grindem*). Permit me to escort you to the place of execution.

(*Enter Mame Hensell, and Mrs. Morton, quite gorgeously got up.*)

Mrs. M. (*surveying the room through her lorgnette*). Well, well, are you all here? Is n't this delightful! It reminds me of Byron's beautiful lines:

"There was a sound of revelry by night,
And Belgium's capital had gathered all her beauty
and her chivalry."

Galliger. " . . . And bright the lamps shown o'er fair women and—" (*with a shrug*) an assortment of men and boys."

Mrs. M. (*gazing about delightedly*). How pretty the room looks! Good evening, Professor Wright.—How soon will the party come?

Babe. Before we get this line fixed, I'll wager. Now, Professor Wright, you next.

Millie. Mrs. Morton ought to stand next to Professor.

Bess. No, next to Mrs. Grindem. That's the place of honor.

Frank. Let me go home and get my Complete Letter Writer. It's on page 632, at the bottom of the page.

Babe. (*frowning at Frank*). Don't be silly.—Yes, I think so, too. Right here, Mrs. Morton.

Frank. (*offering his arm to Mrs. Morton*). Allow me to escort you, Madam.

Mrs. M. Escort me where? I'm not going any place.

Babe. He means stand in line, Mrs. Morton.

Mrs. M. In line for what?

Galliger. Promotion, we hope, Mrs. Morton.

Mame. Maybe Mrs. Morton doesn't want to stand in line? (*She consults with Babe, aside.*)

Mrs. M. Oh, you mean a reception line. Why didn't you say so? I'm afraid I would faint this warm night. Once, at a reception, when I was in line—it was a very warm night, you know; much warmer than tonight, and very sultry—sticky,—that sort of night. I think it was in July. No, it couldn't have been July, because the reception was given for the Governor, and nobody ever receives the Governor in the summer time. Maybe it was in—

Galliger. (*in response to a gesture telegram from Babe*). No, Governors are not usually considered respectable in the summer. I tell you, Mrs. Morton, you sit here, apart from the riff raff, as it were, on a throne.

Mrs. G. Yes, Mother, that will be nice for you. Then you can see everything, and not get tired. (*Mrs. Morton is duly enthroned.*)

Babe. (*taking Wright by the arm*). Professor Wright, you must stand closer to Professor. Where is Professor Graham?

Galliger. (*arranging Mrs. Morton's footstool*). He'll be here about nine. I forgot to tell you. He had to kill a man at eight o'clock.

Mrs. M. Kill a man? Why, what do you mean, Mr. Galliger?

Babe. He does n't mean anything, Mrs. Morton. Don't pay any attention to him.

Grindem (*with a sigh*). I think you ought to serve coffee between elections. I'm getting weak.

Mrs. M. (*from her throne*). Poor John! Why don't you lean against something?

Babe. Mame, go get some punch. It's awfully hard to stand so long.—*Frank.* you next. Right here. (*Mame goes out.*)

Bess. We ought to leave a place for Professor Graham and his wife, ought n't we?

Grindem. Nature abhors a vacuum.

Galliger. You are referring to President Sawyer here?

Millie. Listen! Hark! I thought I heard somebody coming! (*Babe takes off her apron, and everybody grows self-conscious.*) There, they've gone past.

Galliger. My, what a relief!

(*Re-enter MAME HENSELL, with a tray of punch cups.*)

Grindem. (*taking a cup*). You have saved my life. I wish it were liquid beefsteak. (*Mame goes down the line.*)

Mrs. M. It's a beautiful color. Of course it is n't wine, Mr. Galliger?

Galliger. Strawberry cordial, Mrs. Morton, with the straw left out. "The cup that cheers, but not inebrates."

Babe. Frank, you and Miss Secretary next.

Frank. (*to Millie*). Miss Secretary, allow me. (*They start forward.*)

Galliger. (*chants the "I ohengrin"*).

"Guided by us, thrice happy pair
Enter this doorway, 'tis love that invites;
All that is brave, all that is fair,
Love, now triumphant, forever unites."

Babe. Galliger, subside. We've got to hurry. Now, Bess, you next.

Galliger. I'd like to do the elegant, Bess, but I am subsided.

Bess. (*taking her place*). Who's going to open the door?

Galliger. I am. I've been living on that honor for a month. (*Mame collects the punch cups.*)

Mrs. M. Mercy, you are n't going to shut the door, I hope? We'll all melt!

Babe. No, he means he's going to announce the guests.

Galliger. (*stepping briskly to the door.*) It is e'en so. Mrs. Morton, I will now give you a little exhibition of yours truly in his Lord High Chamberlain stunt.—Mame, go out and come in as if you were company. (*Mame goes, taking the tray and Babe's apron.*) You people get in line there. Professor Wright, you're out of plumb. That's better. Prof., if you could look a little more cheerful, it would enhance the general effect. After all, the occasion is not one for tears. (*calls through the door, "In a minute, Countess!"*). Miss Woodward, will you please put my hat out of sight? It's a blot on the landscape.—Mrs. Morton, you observe that all is in readiness. The line is statuesque, the ladies admirable. (*through the door, "Countess, are you ready?"*). Now, here is where I get in my heavy work. (*He opens the door with a sweep.*) The Lady Florabella, Countess San de Faustino, Mistress of the Robes of Her late Majesty, the Queen of Chili Con Carne. (*Mame sails in, with Babe's apron for a court train, and carrying a child's parasol.*) Ladies and gentlemen, the Countess!

Mrs. M. (*applauding with her fan.*) Mr. Galliger, you are very funny.

Grindem. Lady Florabella, we are delighted to welcome you to America. (*Mame goes down the line with an exaggerated elegance.*)

Frank. I kiss your hand, Countess. (*The door bell rings.*)

Babe. There's somebody! Galliger, shut the door! (*steps and voices are heard in the hall.*) Is Mary there? Listen!

Mrs. G. (*listening.*) That's Mary's voice. She is charmed with her part in the reception.

Galliger. Who's going to take charge of 'em when they come to the jumping-off place?

Babe. What do you mean? (*adjusting their posi-*

tions). Stand closer, you people. There. Don't have any gaps in the line.

Frank. No, let the people have the gaps—if there must be gaps!

Millie. Yes, people always look like lost sheep when they come to the end of a reception line.

Girndem. (*sighing*). They will probably feel worse than they look.

Babe. But the line's got to end somewhere.

Galliger. That's the point. The line ought to melt away, not end with a jolt. What we need is a transitional paragraph, as Miss McCurdy would say.

Wright. (*who has been talking with Mrs. Grindem*). Let Miss Woodward be the transitional paragraph.

Babe. But I've got to be in the kitchen at first. Mame, you stand next to Bess, and get them started.

Mame. (*drawing on her gloves*). Started where?

Babe. (*"fixing things" right and left*). Introduce them to Mrs. Morton, yon know, and—oh, keep them from looking lonesome—keep them stirring about.

Galliger. And stirred up. Listen! (*He listens at the door*). I think they're coming down! (*The bell rings again and again.*)

Bess. Listen! There's somebody else! I wish they'd all come down at once. It's not so embarrassing.

Babe. (*starting out*). Remember, Mame, it all hangs on you to get them away from the line gracefully. Keep them moving.—Stand closer, Professor Wright.—And Bess, you must n't budge from the line.—Frank, you see that she stays there. (*Goes.*)

Bess. I reckon I'll stay here all right. My gloves are almost killing me.

Frank. (*readjusting his necktie*). Oh vanity, the crimes that are committed in thy name!

Galliger. (*listening at door*). There must be a hundred people upstairs. I trust you hid your valuables, Mrs. Grindem?

Bess. I'll bet they're coming down in a bunch. Is my hair all right?

Grindem. (*changing his weight to the other foot*). What inducement can we offer to get them to come down, do you think?

Galliger. The girls are powdering their noses, I suppose. Are you all ready?

Bess. Now, Mrs. Morton, I'll shove them along to Mame, and you must help her, you know.

Frank. Railroad them right through. Don't stop to talk, you girls.

Galliger. No, this is no time to be sociable. (*Listens. Then, with suppressed excitement.*) They're coming! The whole bunch! Fix your faces! (*The line stiffens. Galliger flings open the door with much eclat.*) Mr. Theodore Hartridge and the Misses Hartridge. Mr. Harrison Taylor. (*As the guests advance gravely into the room, a terrific—an appalling!—crash of falling crockery is heard. The receiving smiles freeze, but in an instant Mrs. Grindem, recovering, extends her hand, smiling serenely.*)

Galliger. (*aside*). "Mistress of herself though China fall!"

(*As the guests go down the line, very slow curtain.*)

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